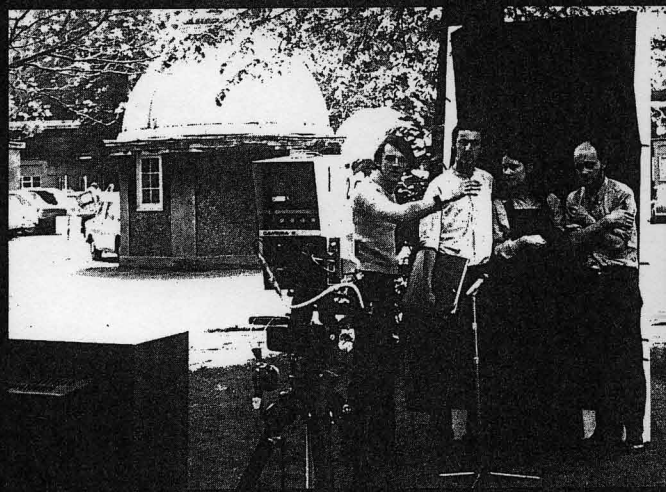


Brian Hoey



Videvent 1973–1975 (installation views and stills)

Origins

My present work originates from my dissatisfaction with the artist's continuing trend towards specialisation and gradual alienation from everyday life. All too often the artist assumes that the spectator possesses an insight into those particular concerns governing his work when, in my opinion, the observer is usually overwhelmed by the variety and complexity of such language conventions. There seems to be an increasing danger that many artists' work relates only to those actively involved in the arts, with no facility for anyone of a less sophisticated and not so well-informed nature.

The need to adhere to a direct, immediate communication system led to an investigation of the relationship between colour and emotion, with a view to using colour change as the chief element in such a communication process. This investigation, in turn, led to the development of interactive works; in which spectator and colour source exist in a near-symbiotic state with each initiating, through response, a change in the other's behaviour. By this time my research had shown the effect of colour on the emotions to be a subject dearly in need of more objective and coherent research, at present full of contradictory theories and conclusions drawn from unrelated, and generally ill-conceived, experimental data.

These findings caused me to consider additional means of interaction. This is not to say that I had abandoned my interest in colour, but rather that I had shifted the emphasis of the investigation from one of the single elements in the system, to the entire system of interaction between object and observer. I began to wonder what the effect might be of a system using the visual and aural images of the participant;

possibly it would work in a more direct manner than the more abstract use of colour.

Video Experiments

For a system in which the spectator is participating with aspects of his own appearance or behaviour the most suitable medium appeared to be video, as it provides the basis for a real-time relation of events coupled with the ability to modify images in a fluid, organic manner. Practical possibilities include the manipulation of the participant in time: he may be seeing himself in the past with his actions over a period of time built up as a composite picture. Another possibility is the manipulation of the appearance of his image, or an electronic abstraction of his image, into quite a different form; as he moves so might an abstract pattern change in sympathy with his actions. The participant may be presented with an aspect of his behaviour hitherto unseen by him and, hopefully, encourage a greater awareness of the relationship between him and his environment.

When first familiarising myself with the various procedures and artistic possibilities of the video medium, my experiments were recorded for future reference; these 'Video Notes' are sometimes presented in their own right, to offer further insight into the process behind the 'live' video events that I present.

Presentations of this event, *Videvent*, include: University College London; Exeter College of Art; Slade School of Fine Art; 'The Video Show', Serpentine Gallery; Kendal Gathering.

The Present

I currently hold a joint appointment, with Wendy Brown, as Artist in Residence at Washington, Tyne and Wear.